

Preface

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1. COPIES OF THE FOOD CODE

To obtain a copy of the official new District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR Title 25 - Food and Food Operations Regulations), please contact:

**The District of Columbia Office of Documents
and Administrative Issuances
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 520 South
Washington, DC 20001**

Phone: 202-727-5090

There is a **charge** (between \$16 - \$20) for a copy of that document, which is also available on line (after June 20, 2003) at: <http://www.os.dc.gov>. Click and search under DC Municipal Regulations & Register. For Mail Orders: Send exact amount in a check or money order made payable to the D.C. Treasurer and specify the title and subject. For Over-the-Counter Sales: Bring cash, check or money order. All sales are final. There is a dishonored check charge.

The Department of Health has also developed this **User-Friendly Version** of the District's Food Code (DCMR Title 25 – Food and Food Operations Regulations), which significantly mirrors the layout of the federal *Food Code*. It contains introductory charts and tables, color for emphasis, italicized and bolded defined words and terms, and an index (to be completed). This **User-Friendly Version** also highlights modifications, which the District has made to the 1999 federal *Food Code*, and provides useful forms and responses to frequently-asked questions.

This **User-Friendly Version** is available on the Department of Health's web site at: <http://www.dchealth.dc.gov> Click and search under the Environmental Health Administration icon.

We do not believe you need to have a copy of the federal *Food Code*, which the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), along with a number of other federal agencies, jointly publish, and update every two years. While the federal *Food Code* contains a number of guidances that could be helpful to you, the Department has attempted to ensure that many of these guidances have been provided to you in this **User-Friendly Version** or in other documents. Please remember

that the District has only adopted the 1999 version of the federal *Food Code*. If, you would like to obtain a copy of the 1999 federal *Food Code*, please contact:

**U.S. Department of Commerce
Technology Administration
National Technical Information Service
5285 Port Royal, Springfield, VA 22161**

Phone: 703- 605-6000

Refer to report number PB99-115925

2. INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE USER

a. [Organization of the Code](#)

The District's Food Code provisions address essentially five (5) areas:

- Personnel Subtitle B: Chapters 2-5
- Food Subtitle C: Chapters 6-13
- Equipment/facilities/supplies Subtitle D: Chapters 14-22
Subtitle E: Chapters 23-27
Subtitle F: Chapters 28-32
Subtitle G: Chapters 33-35
- Requirements for special food establishments Subtitle H: Chapters 36-40 and,
- Compliance and Enforcement Subtitle I: Chapters 41-49.

A new user will find it helpful to review the Table of Contents together with the Inspection Guide found in Annex 2 in order to quickly gain an understanding of the scope and sequence of subjects included within these five (5) areas.

b. [Numbering of the Provisions](#)

The structural nomenclature of the Food Code is as follows:

Example:

Title	25
Subtitle	D
Chapter	14

Section	1400
Section	1400.1

c. [Use of Internal Cross-References](#)

Internal cross-referencing is widely used throughout the document to eliminate the need for restating provisions. For example, fixtures and devices necessary for handwashing are relevant to both the plumbing (Subtitle E) and the facilities (Subtitle F) portions. To alert the reader to relevant information and provide a system by which each violation is recorded under the one most appropriate provision, the Code uses the phrases “ as specified under (followed by a Code cite such as a chapter or section)”.

d. [Requirements presented by Principle rather than Subject](#)

The Food Code presents requirements by principle rather than by subject. For example, equipment requirements are presented under headings such as Materials, Design and Construction, Numbers and Capacities, Location and Installation, and Maintenance and Operation rather than by refrigerators, sinks, and thermometers. In this way provisions need be stated only once rather than repeated for each piece or category of equipment. Where there are special requirements for certain equipment, the requirement is delineated under the appropriate principle (e.g. Design and Construction) and listed separately in the index.

e. [Requirements presented as Critical or Noncritical](#)

Requirements contained in the Food Code are presented as being in one of two (2) categories of importance: critical, which is identified by an asterisk (*) and noncritical. An asterisk after a tagline (which is the language immediately following a section number that introduces the subject of the section) indicates that all of the provisions within that section are critical, unless provisions that are noncritical are followed by the bold, superscripted **N**.

Any unmarked provisions within a section that has an asterisked tagline are critical. All provisions following a tagline that is not marked with an asterisk are noncritical.

f. [Defined Words and Terms are Highlighted](#)

Defined words and terms are *italicized and bolded* in the text of the Food Code subtitles to alert the reader to the fact that there is a specific meaning assigned to those words and terms, and that the meaning of a provision is to be interpreted in the defined context.

g. [District Changes to Federal *Food Code* are Highlighted](#)

Where the District has made changes to the federal *Food Code* by modifying or adding new provisions, the Department has highlighted (shaded light gray) the changes throughout this document.

h. Useful Annexes Included

The Annexes located at the back of this document contain a number of helpful documents such as model forms that can be used by food establishments and frequently-asked questions regarding the Food Code.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department would like to acknowledge the dedicated efforts and contributions of the its Office of Enforcement, Compliance & Environmental Justice: Doreen E. Thompson, Chief and Olga Clegg, Attorney Advisor, in preparing the Food Code legislation, regulations, notices and other implementing documents, and specifically, this **User-Friendly Version** of the Food Code.

The Department would also like to acknowledge its partnership with the federal Food and Drug Administration and their assistance in training District food staff as to the Food Code.

4. INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding the Food Code Regulations should be directed as follows:

**The District of Columbia Department of Health
Environmental Health Administration
Bureau of Food, Drug & Radiation Protection
Division of Food Protection
51 N Street NE, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20002**

Phone: 202-535-2500